ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In a bit string check method, a bit string to be

5   searched is divided into a plurality of partial-object bit

strings, which are compared to the plurality of registration

bit patterns at multiple stages. At a current stage which is

one of the multiple check stages, comparison is made with

all the possible values of a partial-object bit string. in

10   accordance with the comparison result and the pattern table

where a plural registration bit pattern is registered, it is

possible to obtain a judgment result indicating a presence

or absence of a partial registration bit pattern which

matches at least the partial-object bit string. According to

15   the judgment result, check-continuation information

including the address of the pattern table of the stage

subsequent to the current stage is outputted.